

Message Text

SECRET

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S E C R E T MOSCOW 17360

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR TOON

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: SALT, UR
SUBJECT; MOBILE ICBM LAUNCHERS; KORNIYENKO'S VIEWS

REF: STATE 185976

1. I MET WITH KORNIYENKO (ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER SINCE GROMYKO NOW ON VACATION) MORNING OF JULY 25 AND GAVE HIM THE WRITTEN STATEMENT OF OUR POSITION ON MOBILE ICBM LAUNCHERS PER REFTEL.

2. AFTER READING THE STATEMENT CAREFULLY, KORNIYENKO RESPONDED THAT THE STATEMENT WAS ESSENTIALLY DIFFERENT FROM REMARKS BY WARNKE TO DOBRYNIN AND SEMENOV. WARNKE HAD SPOKEN ONLY GENERALLY TO DOBRYNIN AND SEMENOV ABOUT REPORTS IN THE U.S. PRESS AND VARIOUS OPTIONS; HE HAD NOT PRESENTED A STATEMENT OF THE USG POSITION ON THIS MATTER.

3. EVEN SO, KORNIYENKO CONTINUED, SEMENOV HAD RESPONDED NEGATIVELY, AND KORNIYENKO COULD SAY VERY DEFINITELY THE FOLLOWING:

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--THIS STATEMENT, IF IT ACTUALLY REPRESENTS THE USG'S POSITION, WOULD OPEN THE POSSIBILITY FOR MANY ROCKET LAUNCHERS ("PUSKOVYE USTANOVKI");

--THIS WOULD BE CONTRARY TO ALL OF OUR PREVIOUS UNDERSTANDINGS SINCE VLADIVOSTOK AND WOULD UNDERMINE THE BASIS FOR OUR NEGOTIATIONS, AS SEMENOV SPECIFICALLY

TOLD WARNKE;

--IT IS LAUNCHERS ("PUSKOVYE USTANOVKI"), NOT
ROCKETS, THAT ARE SUBJECT TO NUMERICAL LIMITS, AND BOTH
SIDES HAVE AGREED ON THE PRINCIPLE THAT NO NEW SILOS
WILL BE CONSTRUCTED;

--IT WOULD BE "IMPOSSIBLE" FOR THE SOVIET SIDE
TO ACCEPT THIS USG POSITION WITHOUT A CHANGE IN AGREE-
MENTS REACHED BETWEEN US, YET TO CHANGE THESE AGREEMENTS
WOULD DISRUPT THE ENTIRE AGREEMENT;

--THE JOINT DRAFT TEXT MAKES VERY CLEAR THE RELATION-
SHIP BETWEEN HARDENED SILOS AND LAUNCHERS;

--YOUR WRITTEN STATEMENT IS "A RADICAL DEPARTURE."

4. I SAID WE DID NOT CONSIDER THAT OUR POSITION
REQUIRED CHANGES IN THE JOINT DRAFT TEXT. THE NUMBERI-
CAL LIMITS APPLIED TO LAUNCHERS, NOT SILOS. I SAID I
WANTED TO BE SURE I HAD UNDERSTOOD KORNYIENKO CORRECTLY;
WAS IT THE SOVIET POSITION THAT THE STATEMENT
I HAD JUST GIVEN HIM WAS INCOMPATIBLE WITH AGREEMENTS
REACHED AND THE JOINT DRAFT TEXT?

5. HE SAID HE WAS "ABSOLUTELY SURE" OF THIS. IT WAS
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TRUE THAT ACCORDING TO PRESENT UNDERSTANDINGS MOBILE
LAUNCHERS WERE UNRESTRICTED FOLLOWING THE EXPIRATION OF
THE THREE-YEAR PROTOCOL. BUT REINFORCED POSITIONS, HE
SAID, "ABSOLUTELY DO NOT CORRESPOND WITH OUR UNDER-
STANDING." YOU CANNOT SAY THAT SILOS ARE SEPARATE FROM
LAUNCHERS. EACH POSITION MUST BE COUNTED AS A LAUNCHER.
THE SOVIET SIDE WOULD HAVE NO WAY TO BE SURE WHICH
SILOS CONTAINED ROCKETS, AND WHICH DID NOT. AND NO NEW
SILOS CAN BE CONSTRUCTED. IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE
WHETHER THEY ARE HARDENED OR NOT.

6. KORNIYENKO ASSERTED THAT DOBRYNIN HAD EXPRESSED THIS
SOVIET POSITION IN GENERAL TERMS DURING HIS CONVERSATION
WITH WARNKE, AND SEMENOV HAD TAKEN THE SAME LINE AS
KORNIYENKO HAD JUST VOICED, ALTHOUGH SEMENOV MAY NOT
HAVE USED EXACTLY THE SAME WORDS. "IT IS VERY SAD,"
KORNIYENKO CONCLUDED, "IF THE US SIDE HAS ERECTED A
NEW OBSTACLE, VIRTUALLY INSURMOUNTABLE, TO AGREEMENT."

7. I SAID I COULD NOT AGREE WITH HIS CHARACTERIZATION
OF OUR WRITTEN STATEMENT, BUT HE AND I WERE NOT IN A
POSITION TO NEGOTIATE THIS MATTER AT THIS TIME. I WOULD

OF COURSE REPORT HIS VIEWS TO WASHINGTON. TOON

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